

Lesson Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Lesson ID: 10353-44623

Title: DISASTER COORDINATION CENTER (DCO) STAFFING

Operation/Exercise Name: NORTHRIDGE CA EARTHQUAKE      Observed: 21 Mar 1994

Originator: OPERATIONS OFF

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5. (U) OBSERVATION:

The Disaster Coordination Center (DCO) was unable to properly coordinate support to the disaster relief because it was improperly staffed.

6. (U) DISCUSSION:

The DCO, collocated at FEMA HQ, should function as the responsible Army's forward deployed HQ. It included liaison representatives from all Services supporting the relief. The DCO for this operation had only three (3) officers assigned to Los Angeles. Overall, FEMA was disorganized yet responsible for determining all requirements and providing logistical support. A G-3 representative in the DCO was desperately needed to evaluate linguist requirements and advise the DAC on location assignment. A small G-3 cell was necessary to coordinate 24 hour operations and coordinate military support among active, reserve and national guard units. A G-4 representative was desperately needed to support requests from units deployed to conduct relief operations rather than require each unit to arrange logistics (Billeting and transportation) directly from the overwhelmed, overburdened FEMA contracting office.

7. (U) LESSON LEARNED:

Conduct disaster relief operations in the same fashion as a military operation by deploying a fully staffed (all G-sections represented) forward HQ on-site.

8. (U) RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Contact DLIFLC for advise on linguist matters.

9. (U) COMMENTS:

None.

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